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REPORT OF THE

Inter-Governmental Meeting of African Ports Executives and Senior Port Officials

Addis Ababa, 29-31 October, 1987

A. ORGANIZATION

1. The Inter-Governmental Meeting of African Ports Executives and Senior port officials was held in ECA Headquarters in Addis Ababa from 29-31 October 1987

B PARTICIPATION

2. Representatives of the following Port Authorities of African Governments, African Inter-Governmental Organizations and United Nations Specialized Agencies took part in the work of the meeting: Algeria, Cote D'Ivoire, Guinee Kenya, Morocco, Mauritius, Mozambique, People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia and Zaire, International Labour Organization (ILO), Port Management Association of Eastern and Southern Africa (PMAESA), International Maritime Organization (IMO), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Inter-Governmental Standing Committee on Shipping (ISCOS) and North African Port Management Association (NAPMA) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

C OPENING OF THE MEETING

3. The meeting was officially opened by Mr. Tchouta Mousaa, Deputy Executive Secretary of Economic Commission for Africa in the name of the Executive Secretary, Prof. Adebayo Adedeji, who was unable to attend the meeting as a result of an urgent business trip outside Addis Ababa.

4 In his opening statement, Mr. Tchouta Moussa summarized the main purposes of the meeting emphasizing the importance ports are playing now and can play in the future in the development of African's foreign trade. He went on saying that African States are highly dependent on their foreign trades and about 90 percent of the overall trade is seaborne.

5. He brought to the attention of African port officials that the need to develop and efficiently operate them should be given priority and urged them to take the necessary measures towards this end. He thanked African Governments that have given development priorities to their ports as of 1960, since most of the African countries got independence. However, he reminded them that much is to be done in the future to alleviate African ports efficiencies.

6. The Deputy Executive Secretary outlined the activities that ECA had been carrying out since its establishment. Apart from Technical assistance provided to African ports in 1960's and 1970's, ECA reported to the African Ministers Meeting in 1971 in Tunis, Tunisia, the need to establish Port Management Associations for the three Subregions of West/Central, Eastern/Southern and North Africa. The Ministers accepted the proposal and hence the three port Management Associations were created.

7. Regarding the United Nations Transport and Communications Decade for Africa, Mr Tchouta Moussa said that it was the first time that the United Nations declared a transport development Decade programme for a Region. He said that 120 port projects were identified in the Phase I programme (1980-1983) and 70 port projects in the Phase II programme (1984-1988). He informed

the delegates that most of these port projects are implemented or are in the process of implementation. As a result of African ports development he said that today there are about 600 berths for ocean going vessels in all African ports compared to about 150 in early 1960's.

8. He urged Regional and Subregional Co-operation among African ports and also urged discussion on issues of mutual interest in order to improve the performance standards of African ports. He also indicated that assistance could be obtained from the UN Specialized Agencies in the field of co-operation.

9. The Deputy Executive Secretary, in his concluding remarks wished the meeting to be successful and said he would be looking forward to the outcome of the meeting.

D. ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS

Adoption of the Agenda (agenda item 2)

10. The following proposed agenda was adopted.

1. Opening of the meeting

2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

3. Election of the Bureau

4. Report by ECA and ISCOS on the causes of low productivity in African ports and proposals for improvement

5. Report by ECA on development and effectiveness of regional ports co-operation in Africa

6. Reports by UNCTAD on the improvement of port performance

7. Report by IMO on training for port equipment maintenance

8. Report by ILO on Impact of Spiralling Demand on port resources for acceleration of turn around of ships on ports.

9. Reports by subregional Port Management Associations on their activities

10. Reports by ESAMI, MINCOMAR and ISCOS on their activities in the field of maritime transport

11. Information by ILO on its recent publications

12. Information by ECA on United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa (1978-1988) related to development of African Ports

13. Recommendations of the Inter-Governmental group of African port Experts and senior officials on ways and means to improve productivity in African ports.

14. Any other business

15. Adoption of the report of the meeting

16. Closure of the meeting.

11. The meeting agreed to meet as follows:

Morning from 10 a.m - 1 p.m
Afternoons from 3 - 6 p.m

12. Election of the Bureau (agenda item 3)

The Bureau was elected as follows:

Chairman - Ethiopia
V. Chairman- Guinea
Rapporteur Morocco

Reports by ECA and ISCOS on the causes of low productivity in African Ports and proposals for improvments (agenda item 4)

13. A member of ECA Secretariat introduced the paper TRANSCOM/144 highlighting the main causes why port productivity in Africa is low. He elaborated further by saying that such low port productivity rates could affect shipping activities in Africa thus causing port congestions. He also highlighted how port congestion could affect African ports. He urged the meeting to discuss the paper and jointly establish mechanisms to improve port productivity rates in African ports.

14. The chairman then called-upon the representative of ISCOS to present his paper on the same port productivity question.

15. ISCOS Representative took the floor and said that his paper contains two parts namely, information on ISCOS activities, its objectives and aims and on port productivity.

16. In his introduction on low productivity, he highlighted the technical as well as administrative problems African ports are facing. On the technical side he said that labour relations, information flow, equipment and spare parts etc. should be improved. He also mentioned the problems of cargo take off from ports and the documentation and management problems cargo encounter both at ports and in the hinterlands. He indicated that ports in Africa should be business like enterprises. He said that some African ports have the tradition of appointing Senior Staff for political reasons and suggested that such practices be stopped.

17. On appointment of Senior officials of ports the advantage and disadvantages were discussed and it was agreed to leave such matters to African Governments themselves. It was recognized that, if such political appointments occur in Africa as indicated in ISCOS paper, African Governments have reasons why they do so.

18. The representatives of PMAESA, Tanzania Harbours, Seychelles port, Sudan port, Somalia port, Mauritius port, Kenya port, Guinea port Authorities commented on both ECA and ISCOS papers citing examples of their own ports productivity activities. Two issues namely, stuffing and unstuffing of containers in ports and the question of appointment of Senior staff to African ports were discussed at length. On stuffing and unstuffing of containers the consensus reached was that because of lack of facilities to transport containers to countries from ports and because of various consignments in one container African ports were forced to stuff and unstuff containers in their ports and it was suggested that this to continue until facilities are improved. The fact that at present 70-80 per cent of African cargoes are loose cargo and 20-30 per cent are containerized was recognized.

19. The general discussion concluded that the causes for low productivity in African ports have been identified and known long time ago. Even solutions have been found. What was lacking, it was indicated, was an action programme for solution of the problems that have been identified. Delegates agreed that the issue for discussion now should be this and not identifying causes.

Report by ECA on development and effectiveness of Regional ports co-operation in Africa (agenda item 5)

20. The representative of the ECA Secretariat introduced the document TRANSCOM/146. The history of African port development was described, and main problems of African ports were emphasised giving an account of existing regional co-operation among African ports and organizations and indicating the role of ECA in this field. The document also proposed several fields in which co-operation could be further developed.

21. During the discussions on the document the representatives of the subregional port management associations (NAPMA and PMAESA) gave account of the activities carried by them in the field of port development at the subregional level. All the participants agreed that co-operation among ports, particularly at the regional level, was far from satisfactory. It was agreed that the meeting would elaborate an outline of the main fields of co-operation among ports. The participants agreed that ECA should play a role of as a centre monitoring contacts among ports of various sub-regions and as a forum for regular exchange of expertise among the subregional port management associations. At the same time ports of Africa should endeavour to establish direct contacts among themselves.

Report by UNCTAD on steps to Improve Port Performance (agenda item 6)

22. The paper was introduced by the representative of UNCTAD Shipping Division. Factors influencing port productivity were described in the document, and definitions of productivity in ports were also made. An account of reasons for low productivity in ports was given. In the conclusion the paper proposed practical recommendations on steps to be taken by port administrations, in order to improve productivity in ports.

23. After the document was introduced, the ECA Secretariat proposed to create a task-force group to elaborate a programme of actions to be undertaken in order to improve port performance in Africa. The proposal was unanimously adopted and the following task force group was created:

1. NAPMA
2. PMAESA
3. UNCTAD
4. ISCOS
5. Guinea
6. Tanzania

24. The participants agreed that the paper by UNCTAD was a very useful and practical document, which proposed concrete measures to be undertaken by African countries in order to bring performance of ports to a higher level. It was also noted, that many of the recommendations could be implemented on the level of port administrators without costly investments and that implementations of such recommendations would require only some reorganizational measures which would be very beneficial, taking into consideration the scarcity of financial resources in many African ports.

25. It was also suggested that the UNCTAD paper be used as a basis for the programme of actions to be elaborated by the task force group.

Training on Port Equipment Maintenance (agenda item 7)

26. The paper was introduced by the representative of the IMO Secretariat. The main issues covered in the paper were as follows:

- Need for trained technicians to maintain port equipment in Africa
- Importance of co-operation among ports in this field
- Spheres of training
- Existing institutions for training
- Possible contribution by UN agencies
- Importance of attention to training on the part of African Governments
- Necessity of joint efforts by UN Specialized agencies and other organizations in development of training in the field of equipment maintenance.

27. During the discussion the participants noted that special attention should be paid to the older generation of port workers who cannot easily adapt themselves to new technology in ports. It was also noted that urgent attention should be given as far as possible to standardize port equipment in order to enable port administrations to cope with the increased demands of maintenance.

Report by ILO on Impact of Spiralling Demand on Port Resources for acceleration of turn-around of ships in ports and Information on recent ILO publications (agenda item 8 and 11)

28. Under this items three papers were introduced by the ILO representative.

(a). Port recourses for acceleration of turn-around by ships in ports.

(b). New cargo handling techniques: Implications for Port Equipment and Skills

(c). An ILO strategy for Port Workers Training

29. The papers emphasized the following:

- Necessity to provide port workers with adequate social conditions in their work.
- Importance of the improved labour management relations.
- Interrelation between workers motivation and productivity in ports.
- New developments in cargo handling technology and port labour trends;
- ILO approach to port training.

30. The ILO representative informed the meeting of the availability of the papers for African port administrations.

31. There were no comments on the papers by the participants.

Reports by subregional Port Management Associations on their activities (agenda item 9)

32. It was noted by the meeting that this item of the agenda was fully covered by NAPMA under agenda item 5; as reflected under para 21 of this report.

Report by ISCOS on its activities in the field of maritime transport (agenda item 10)

33. It was noted by the meeting that this item of the agenda was fully covered by ISCOS under agenda item 4, as reflected under paras 15 to 19 of this report.

Information by ECA on the United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa (1978-1988) related to development of African ports (agenda item 12).

34. The representative of the Secretariat introduced document TRANSCOM/145. The meeting was briefly informed of the origin and history of the Decade and activities of ECA as lead agency to assist countries in securing funds for the projects of the Decade's programme. Detailed information was given on

the status of the port projects, included in the first and second phases of the Decade. The secretariat requested participants to give any additional information on the status of port projects. Representatives of Tanzania, Tunisia and Morocco gave additional information on the port projects in their countries.

Recommendations of the intergovernmental meeting of African Port Experts and Senior Officials on ways and means to improve productivity in African ports (agenda item 13)

35. During the discussion on this item of the agenda it was noted that the working group established to elaborate draft recommendations successfully carried out a voluminous work. The recommendations were adopted unanimously. The final version of the recommendations is annexed to this report.

36. It was also noted that though it was recommended that ECA be a focal point for maintaining co-operation among African ports, the main responsibility laid with the latter and ultimately the success depended on them.

37. The representative of NAPMA proposed that ECA should organize meetings of African Port Experts every two years, and that Port Management Associations should organize their meetings every six months to assess the progress in implementation of the recommendations. While the idea of organizing meetings of experts by ECA every two years was supported, there was no unanimous agreement on how often the associations should meet to review implementation of the recommendations. At least one meeting a year was considered as a minimum. ECA would be invited to attend such meetings.

Any other business (agenda item 14)

38. There were no comments on this item of the agenda.

Adoption of the report of the meeting (agenda item 15)

39. The draft report was adopted by the meeting with minor amendments.

Closure of the meeting (agenda item 16)

40. The Chairman of PMAESA read out the vote of thanks annexed to this report.

41. The Chairman of NAPMA made a statement in which he thanked all the participants for their activity and resolution to make all possible to improve performance of African ports. He particularly emphasized the importance for every individual port and every subregional port management association to devotedly aim at achieving positive results in their port's performance without heavily relying upon others and without waiting for somebody's help. He thanked ECA and other UN agencies that contributed to the success of the meeting.

42. The Chief of Transport, Communications and Tourism Division made his final statement first of all by recalling the emphasis to be put on the recommendations of the meeting. He went on saying that every responsible port official knew the existing problems but what was needed was actions to solve

the problems and in this respect it was important that the participants were able to elaborate the programme of action in the form of the adopted recommendations. It was important not to stop at this point but to reserve no efforts to have this programme implemented. And the responsibility there was prima facie with ports themselves. ECA was ready to carry out what the ports could not handle, for example, to call meetings of African port experts on Biennual basis.

43. The report of the meeting and the recommendations would be also brought to the attention of the UNTACDA IACC meeting (8 to 12 February 1988 in Nairobi) and of the 6th meeting of Ministers of Transport, Communications and Tourism (14 to 19 March 1987 in Kinshasa), concluded the Chief of TCTD.

44. The Chairman thanked all the participants for their constructive contribution to the success of the meeting and asked them not to forget what was agreed upon, when they would be back home. He also thanked the meeting for electing him as Chairman and wished all the participants a pleasant and safe trip back home.

The meeting was closed on Saturday 31 October 1987 at 03.30 p.m.

Recommendations

of the intergovernmental meeting of African Port Experts and Senior officials on ways and means to improve productivity in African Ports

Preamble

The intergovernmental meeting of African Port Experts and Senior officials held from 29 to 31 October 1987 in Addis Ababa, having reviewed the working documents of the meeting, covering the issue of productivity in African ports, and having realized that the efforts by African national port authorities and governments alone could not completely solve the problem of low port productivity and that co-operation in the field of ports at subregional, regional and intergovernmental levels should be developed, committed itself to take steps to improve port performance and made the following recommendations to facilitate their work in improving productivity.

A. Governments

(i) To establish appropriate administrative and financial statutes for their port administrations to progressively make them financially and commercially independent

(ii) To ratify and implement, the International Convention on Trade Facilitations (FAL),

(iii) To establish, with the assistance of the UNCTAD FALPRO Unit, if necessary, a permanent national committee for simplifying administrative, commercial, financial and customs procedures to improve traffic flow through ports.

(iv) To review the procedure for setting port tariffs to enable ports to be financially viable.

(v) To allow Port authorities to retain adequate foreign exchange earnings for their needs.

(vi) To establish an integrated transport policy to ensure smooth flow of cargoes through ports.

B. Subregional and regional level

(i) PMAS should compile registers of studies carried out in member ports (title, date, terms of reference, cost, author) and distribute them to members;

(ii) PMAs should compile records of gang productivities, gang composition and wages for different cargo types and distribute to members and ECA (forms to be supplied by NAPMA/ECA);

(iii) PMAs should compile registers of training courses available in the region and distribute them. Training centres should send invitations for courses when appropriate;

(iv) Exchange of technical assistance among African ports should be promoted (i.e. Donor port pays salary; receiving port pays travel and DSA);

(v) The regional training centres should strengthen their system of exchange of information, [illegible],

(vi) Pooling of resources in areas such as dredging equipment, pollution combating measure and know-how should be promoted.

C. Interregional level

(i) ECA will act as a focal point for promoting co-operation through maintaining close contacts with ports and providing a forum for meetings of African port officials;

(ii) UNCTAD is requested to continue its programme of work to improve port performance through development of training materials and technical publications;

(iii) ILO is requested to continue its Port workers development programme to upgrade the capability and performance of port workers;

(iv) IMO is requested to continue its programme of technical support to African countries in the fields of training of port personnel, maritime traffic facilitation, aids to navigation, pollution combating and prevention, etc.;

(v) UNDP is urged to finance regional and inter regional projects which will improve transport [illegible] such as "Mastery of Transport Chain through Logistics Organization", "Strengthening and Modernisation of Maritime Ports and Multimodal Transport Sectors of Eastern and Southern Africa" and also follow up activities related to the maritime transport component of the ECA's on going project entitled "Harmonization and Co-ordination of Transport in Africa".

Vote of thanks from the Port Management Association of Eastern and Southern Africa

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Port Management Association of Eastern and Southern Africa, I would like, once more, to compliment the ECA for the organization of this very important meeting of inter-governmental Ports Executives and senior officials to discuss promotion of productivity in African ports.

Indeed during the last three days of our deliberations, we individually and collectively made some discoveries which if acted upon, will indubitably enhance productivity at our respective ports.

From papers presented by ECA's port experts and other international agencies such as ILO, IMO, ISCOS and UNCTAD, to name a few, we have been able to identify major and common problems affecting performances of our ports. Not only that but for those of us who have attended such a meeting, for the first time, we learned that most of the problems discussed during this meeting were not new. They had been discussed over and over again and resolutions made for their implementation but without serious follow-up actions.

At this meeting, Mr. Chairman, we learned several things which cannot be easily enumerated in such a brief statement as this one. However, suffice it to say that some of us learned one big lesson i.e. if we want rid ourselves of inefficient port operations, having identified the problems, we must as well assign accountability to the various bodies concerned with port operations. That is why we finally came up with resolutions and recommendations which define the roles of port authorities, respective govenments, the ECA and other international organisations. If only these bodies, all of which are represented here, implemented the resolutions as recommended, it is no doubt that in a couple of years port productivity level in this region will be very much above current levels.

Mr. Chairman, PMAESA also learned from this meeting something else equally important. Whereas a port or subregion for that matter, may be struggling with an operational problem, the answer to that problem may lie with another port or association in the region. Here I have in mind of the experience gained by the North African Port Management Association in carrying out several studies while we in the Eastern and Southern African subregion have been desperately seeking UN agencies assistance to solve such problems. Not only has this meeting made us aware of the existence of such services within sister organisations but, to quote my North African counterpart, "the services can be offered free of charge".

This meeting has also provided port authorities with a check list of things that they must always observe and actions they should take to improve port productivity. The categorisation of problems stated in UNCTAD's paper, the emphasis on maintenance and training for maintenance put in the IMO paper and the pressure explained by the ILO expert put on port authorities to modernise

their ports and change port handling equipment, as well as train port workers by changing technology in the shipping industry, are well known to all of us. But, how many port authorities in this region had addressed themselves fully to these subjects prior to this meeting? The answer is probably "very few" if not "none".

I do not intend to provide a summary of what we discussed and agreed. But I cited the above points to highlight how beneficial this meeting has been to those who attended it and to the respective organisations they represented. To do justice to the organisers and authors of papers to this meeting, as well as to our respective authorities which paid for the trips to this meeting, I appeal to honourable delegates to persuade forcefully their respective port authorities/governments and agencies to implement our recommendations fully.

Mr. Chairman, this meeting has been very successful and I would request distinguished delegates to join me in commending ECA, the organiser of this meeting, and the UN Agencies as well as the other international bodies which presented to this meeting pertinent papers of very high standard. I can only urge them to keep this spirit up.

I would also like to congratulate the secretariat for the efficient administrative arrangements. Right from the time each of us landed at the Airport to this moment, Mr. Chairman, there has not been failure of transport, secretarial or any administrative service. Please convey our thanks to Professor Bongoy and his team.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, let me appeal to distinguished fellow delegates to do justice to this meeting, the ECA and the agencies which have made this meeting a success with a reciprocation of concrete actions back at our own ports to the programme we have agreed to implement.

Mr. Chairman, PMAESA wishes all delegates a safe journey back home.

I THANK YOU.